

**MINUTES  
CITY OF BLOOMINGTON  
COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABILITY**

Tuesday, December 13, 2011

6:00 pm McCloskey Room, City Hall, 401 North Morton Street

**Next Meeting:**

January 10, 2011

**Roll Call:**

Members present: Maggie Sullivan, Cynthia Schultz, Ted Mendoza, Bill Brown, Melissa Clark, Janice Lilly, Caleb Steiner, Toby Strout, Dave Rollo, David Parkhurst, Amy Countryman, Amanda Figolah, Ashley Skooglund

Regrets: George Huntington

Staff: Jacqui Bauer, Chris Bentley

Chair Maggie Sullivan called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.

**Public Comment:**

No public comments were made.

**Announcements:**

- Last community orchard work day, Saturday, 17 Dec. 1-5 pm
- Platinum Bike Task Force report approved by city council and mayor. To learn more about the bike taskforce visit [Bloomington.in.gov/platinumbiketaskforce](http://Bloomington.in.gov/platinumbiketaskforce). BCOS might try to identify ways to support different recommendations of the report, like helping to increase the number of sidepaths.
- Deer task force is nearing the end. Should have report by March.
- USGBC is hosting a conference on May 16-18. Regional conference bringing in about 1,000 participants. Will be held in Indianapolis Convention Center. Ted will send out more information about this.
- IU Master Plan called for a transportation demand management plan. Will be conducting this through spring semester, and will explore how to reduce demand for single occupancy vehicles.
- Monroe County Community Energy Challenge will build a 50-watt solar photovoltaic installation on North Showers, and will also involve the Fairview, University, and Project Schools. The energy challenge will kick off on Earth Day.
- Ashley Skooglund, the new appointee to BCOS for the county, introduced herself. Works for the county. Previously was with the United Way working for flood recovery. Been active with CARES board and various other programs. Program development is her specialty. On Monroe County Environmental Quality & Sustainability Commission.

**Approval of Minutes:**

The October and November meeting's minutes were approved.

**Report from the Chair:**

- a. Trillium Horticultural Project

Steve Hale—Introduced a project to utilize a portion of an 80-acre parcel of county property located in the Thomson site as a horticultural park. Key concern: peak oil. Mission statement: Working toward greater food security by increasing access to local organic food, compost and other soil. Potential uses: Large section for compost, farming co-op.

Opportunities: Community gardens, farm school, orchards, nurseries, surface water. Exactly the sort of thing we'd like to see happen (farm school). Members include Marie Fleming, Keith Johnson (Horticultural School), Michael Simmons (Food Policy Council), Gale and Stephen Hale (Volunteers)

Six steps to move ahead and develop a proposal to the county: 1) Develop partnerships, 2) Develop Trillium Park proposal to Monroe County Commissioners. Mark Stoops has agreed to spearhead this from county side. 3) Obtain permission 4) Develop and submit PUD, 5) Complete detailed site development 6) Park development.

Google Trillium Horticultural Park for more information.

b. BCOS membership

The Commission welcomed Ashley. All other commission members should receive letters about being reappointed to BCOS. Those who are thinking of stepping down, please let Maggie know. Long-time member Toby Strout has indicated she will be stepping down. The Commission thanks her for her dedication and service.

c. Parks Switchyard Master Plan Committee

Maggie will be serving on the Switchyard park planning committee. If BCOS members are interested in getting involved, please let Maggie know.

d. BCOS goal summary

Maggie presented the idea of focusing on quarterly topics in 2012 rather than maintaining standing BCOS committees, and suggested the following initial topics: energy for the first quarter, food for the second, waste reduction for the third, and a yet-to-be determined topic for the fourth (possibly green business).

Janice has dates for Food Policy Council, and suggested an event at the Farmer's Market to kick-off the gardening season. Possible target dates: 4/7, 4/14, 4/21, 5/5, 5/19, or 5/26. Food council can get together to coordinate this effort. We should outline next steps.

BCOS needs to outline plans for this coming quarter's activities. One initiative is for MLK Day. Jacqui worked with IU to submit an MLK grant for the Energy SWAT Team initiative again in 2012. Last year we had high school students help install some measures to make homes more energy efficient, and are planning to work again this year with the South High School Environmental Club. Hope to have at least one experienced auditor for each team. If BCOS members are interested in helping out you should have knowledge of basic weatherization techniques.

Earth Care's Task of the Month may offer another opportunity. Jacqui has met with them and has tried to promote the program in neighborhoods, but hasn't had good follow through from those who express interest at initial meetings. BCOS members might spearhead this effort within their neighborhoods.

**ACTION: Follow up with neighborhood associations on Earth Care Task of the Month program**

Part of the quarterly focus approach will involve greater outreach, such as writing an article or speaking on the radio about energy. Ted volunteered. Write a one minute monologue and record in studio. Caleb also expressed interest in gathering info on renewable energy installations—Jacqui will share the data she already has.

**ACTION: Ted will work with radio station to promote the BCOS energy focus.**

BCOS could also support the county's solar grant. The County has setup a committee with SIREN and Bloomingfoods, and Bill Brown at IU.

Earth Day Brain storm ideas: Rain barrel project. Coke has 20-30 barrels to give. Decorate them and auction them off to support a sustainability fund that could support projects community wide. South Bend held a similar auction. Is there anyone willing to spearhead the decoration? Local artists?

**ACTION: Assign captain overseeing the rain barrel decorations.**

Ashley asked for help with Leaders of Today versus Leaders of Tomorrow Energy Challenge mentioned above. Will be meeting early January. to discuss possibilities. Project needs to come forth Apr. 1. Ashley is afraid that the kids will beat the county commissioners in the energy challenge. Hopefully this will become a tradition among families and will get bigger and bigger. Report back for 2013. Are specific dates for ongoing projects ready? Feb. 28 was mentioned as being a good date. BCOS will talk about it in our Feb. meeting. The County hopes to support student efforts through grants and other forms of support.

**ACTION: Talk about the county's Leaders of Today versus Leaders of Tomorrow project at next meeting.**

**Report from Sustainability Coordinator**

a. City Energy Efficiency Data

See November minutes for more details about city energy efficiency. Nearly half of city energy use goes towards wastewater and water delivery. The largest expense is electricity, which is primarily coal based. Important because most people don't think that water is a scarce commodity, but energy implications should be considered as part of water conservation. Police uses a great deal of gasoline and Sanitation is a large user of diesel fuel.

This energy efficiency report hasn't been published yet, but Jacqui can share a draft with anyone interested. The report will be put on the Sustainable City website. This could be tied to the rain barrel projects since water is so tied to energy use. This is a huge problem because our peak in energy use is correlated with high water use (summer time especially).

Duke's bills come with breakdown of use. Energy peaks bring on the need for the lowest efficiency energy producing facilities to come online. Help people realize the need to not use energy during peak time. Duke and Hoosier Energy have programs where they will

knock down price if citizens are willing to track energy use to keep peak energy use down. Lower peaks mean less required energy.

Peak oil means that liquid fuel shortages are the concern. Treatment plants are susceptible to power outages. We need to update the water treatment plant. Huge project but it would be worth it. Cincinnati has switched fleet to natural gas vehicles, which is a good transitional fuel. Expanding wastewater plants. We should switch to anaerobic process to capture energy. Hoosier energy can be a resource for looking into natural gas. May not be worth effort. Cost benefit analysis would be useful. Dave R. and Caleb will meet together to explore these options. The potential may be too small to make these kinds of efforts, but BCOS could check into this.

**ACTION: Caleb will meet with Dave R. to explore anaerobic processing.**

### **Committee reports**

- a. Environmental Commission Planning committee
  - a. Environmental Commission has been off schedule. The committee will report back next month.
- b. STAR committee report
  - a. Working on updating things. Reported to the mayor. The STAR report is a work in progress but that's the way it was designed. Several pages are up online. Would appreciate comments. Send a reminder out with agenda.

**ACTION: BCOS members should look at updated pages online before the next meeting.**

### **New Business:**

- a. Officer elections
  - a. Maggie volunteered to continue as chair. Vote approved.
  - b. Cynthia volunteered to be vice-chair. Vote approved.

- b. Funding request

Little Rock conference, Feb 18-19. There are 5 optional fieldtrips. Dave P. would like to get support to go to visit school gardens. Will report back when he comes back.

What's the policy on funding commissioners to go to conferences? How do we decide who gets to go where? BCOS will have to determine this. Could allocate a small part of the budget towards conference. Funding was approved.

**ACTION: Look at BCOS budget to see if BCOS can fund conference attendance.**

### **Other Business**

- a. Student projects: Bill reviewed the findings of projects completed by his class.

### *Certify Green Businesses*

The process is a meaty and rigorous process but not so rigorous that businesses won't want to participate. Students looked at a lot of options and came up with a step-by-step process.

### *Green Event Guidelines*

Events in the city could be more sustainable. Students conducted a survey and held a pilot event. They wrote an actual green event guide. City of Bloomington should work with IU cooperatively to come up with checklist to score events for sustainability.

#### *Renewable energy options for Bloomington*

Looked at solar energy options and energy efficiency. What is the pay back? How much renewable energy is being used today? Students compared other cities against Bloomington in energy efficiency measures.

#### *Greening the lunchroom*

South High School was the site for this project. Looked at the sustainability levels of the cafeteria within budgetary restrictions. Biggest issue: Styrofoam trays. Not possible to shift to renewable trays since hiring a dishwashing staff would cost thousands of dollars. Students looked at reducing waste: Fewer recycling bins are located in the cafeteria than trash receptacles. Biodegradable trays cost twice as much. Paper trays were not considered. Local food and organic food are the biggest things the kids want. Biggest challenge is dealing with administration. Dave R. recommended showing Synthetic Sea. Could energy savings through HVAC upgrades go towards funding this? Savings from geothermal are just going to General Fund, so pushing for reallocations to sustainable measures. Bill can email more research on this.

**ACTION: Bill will email BCOS more information about reallocating savings towards sustainable measures.**

#### **Adjournment:**

The meeting adjourned at 7:25